



DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

News Release

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For Immediate Release: March 11, 2009

DLNR BEGINS LOOKOUT AND PARKING IMPROVEMENTS AT KALALAU LOOKOUT, KOKE'E STATE PARK, KAUA'I

LIHU'E -- The Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) will begin construction on Monday, March 16, 2009 on improvements at the popular Kalalau Lookout in Koke'e State Park.

Improvements are planned for the parking and lookout areas and will ensure the safety of park visitors and enhance their experience of the park's unique resources.

The parking lot improvements will include reconstructing the existing lot to provide a newly paved area with designated parking stalls as well as defined traffic flow to address the lack of directed parking and unsafe vehicle movement affecting pedestrians and other vehicles.

The lookout improvements will extend the viewing vistas of the Kalalau Valley with expanded viewing areas and new pathways to provide additional safety and convenience to park visitors. Currently park visitors are crossing over protective fencing to access steep ledges for views not provided by the current lookout, thus creating a safety concern.

The parking lot will be temporarily closed during construction, but parking will be provided along adjacent areas and shoulders of Koke'e Road leading to the Pu'u O Kila Lookout.

The lookout will remain open but there may be temporary closures of adjacent pathways due to construction activities such as concrete pouring. The temporary closures are needed to ensure the safety of park visitors. In this case, the Pu'u O Kila Lookout can be used as an alternative scenic vista for viewing the Kalalau Valley.

The parking and lookout improvements are the final step in the overall improvements at the Kalalau Lookout. In 2007 and 2008, DLNR constructed a new comfort station, EPA-compliant sewer system, and improvements removing accessibility barriers pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

“The Kalalau Lookout is one of the top visitor destinations in Koke‘e State Park. These improvements are part of the Lingle-Aiona Administration’s ongoing efforts to upgrade our state parks statewide and to ensure safety and comfort for all residents and visitors who use the parks,” said Laura H. Thielen, DLNR chairperson.

“We will work to minimize inconveniences during the construction, while ensuring the safety of our park visitors as they visit this unique resource. The contractor will provide appropriate safety barriers when the park is open during the construction period,” said Thielen.

The Hawai‘i Tourism Authority provided funding for this project.

The project contractor is BCP Construction, Inc and the contract cost is \$698,428. Completion is expected in September 2009.

Koke‘e State Park is located 15 miles north of Kekaha on Koke‘e Road (Hwy. 550) and it adjoins Waimea Canyon State Park.

Kalalau Lookout within the park offers commanding views of the lush, amphitheater-headed Kalalau Valley from 4,000 feet elevation.

The park features lodging, tent camping, wildland picnicking, hiking in a native rain forest and along the rim of Waimea Canyon. Additional trails in neighboring forest reserves provide excellent areas for observation of native plants, forest birds and insects. The Koke‘e Museum in the park has informative displays about flora, fauna and history of this area. The park offers seasonal plum picking and trout fishing, and pig hunting in the public hunting area.

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